

providing the tobacco barn with a heating unit that does not generate exhaust gases comprising nitric oxides in a fashion that would cause contact between said nitric oxides and said tobacco within said barn, and further modifying said barn to permit correlation of the tobacco-specific nitrosamine content of said cured tobacco with the actual level of nitric oxides to which said tobacco is exposed in said barn, wherein said barn as modified may be used for the curing of tobacco leaves.

REMARKS

Applicant's amendment pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.312 introduces the amendment discussed with Examiner Walls by teleconference after processing of the case for Notice of Allowance, but before issuance of the Notice of Allowance. At that time, it was agreed that the language was appropriate. As this amendment is made prior to payment of the issue fee, serves only to clarify and narrow the scope of protection to a quantifiable value (a value of less than 2 parts per million TSNA achieved by the claimed invention is reflected in the specification as original filed, page 10, lines 25-28) without the introduction of new matter, entry is respectfully requested. It is respectfully submitted that entry is consistent with the guidelines pertaining to 37 C.F.R. §1.312.

Respectfully submitted,

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MARKED-UP COPY OF AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Amended, renumbered from Claim 59) A method for modifying a tobacco curing barn provided with a direct fire heating unit for the purpose of providing conditions suitable for curing tobacco such that resulting cured tobacco obtained from said barn possesses a tobacco-specific nitrosamine content lower than [that obtained prior to such modification,] 2 parts per million, the method comprising:

removing the direct fire heating unit from the tobacco barn,

providing the tobacco barn with a heating unit that does not generate exhaust gases comprising nitric oxides in a fashion that would cause contact between said nitric oxides and said tobacco within said barn, and further modifying said barn to permit correlation of the tobacco-specific nitrosamine content of said cured tobacco with the actual level of nitric oxides to which said tobacco is exposed in said barn, wherein said barn as modified may be used for the curing of tobacco leaves.